

Farmers' Institute at South Hero.

A farmers' institute for Grand Isle county under the direction of the board of agriculture, was held in the vestry of the Congregational church at South Hero, February 26th and 27th.

The session was opened at 2 o'clock p. m., Tuesday, by E. M. Goodwin, who briefly stated the object and aims of the board to be to awaken interest and investigation on the part of the farmers and disseminate information which may have been collected elsewhere rather than to attempt the part of instructors. He hoped the people would not expect too much from the board who being all practical farmers come here to compare methods and see whether we may do better.

Mr. Henry Harrington, president of the Grand Isle agricultural society, was chosen chairman.

Henry Lane of the board then gave a lecture on Scientific Teaching, which was closely listened to.

Mr. Goodwin was then called upon to give his experience in feeding fowls. He alluded to the importance of the proper selection of fowls for the special purpose of the farm, and the combination of the proper proportions, and the feeding of the fowls this winter, but fed corn food, and straw, corn meal and cotton seed meal.

Feeds corn fodder out in the morning then the parts come in, and feed mixed and one feed of oat straw; his cows never did better in butter or condition than they have this winter.

Mr. Gordon asked about the value of roots for butter. Mr. Goodwin didn't think roots were worth anything for that purpose alone, but when properly combined with some richer foods, aid digestion and renders the other parts of the food more available.

Mr. Fletcher inquired the best time to feed fowls. Mr. Goodwin said it is for most of stock just as it was fairly out of blossom.

Mr. S. I. Gordon inquired if cotton seed meal did not injure the quality of the butter. Mr. Goodwin was sure it did not, unless more than two quarts per day were fed.

Major Corbin spoke of his experience in the southern states where cotton seed is used largely as a fertilizer, by dropping the seed whole in the row and plowing the cotton above it. In this way it is considered fully as valuable as commercial fertilizers. This showing that it has a large manurial as well as feeding value.

EVENING.

E. M. Goodwin gave his lecture on The Farmers' Social Position.

Rev. O. G. Wheeler of South Hero, followed with some very thoughtful and instructive remarks. He feared the farmers magnified the opportunities of others and looked with distrust on their own. He thought no class of men had as great opportunity for intellectual growth and development as the farmer. That he does not realize this is his own fault, for no other class enjoys it. He found in many of his own class who are not so much interested in intellectual growth, on account of enforced inactivity of outdoor pursuits. If the farmer only realizes his opportunities, he can see no limit to the growth and culture he may hope to attain. He expressed himself as well pleased with the indications of improvement in this direction which he accomplished this Godspeed.

Mr. Kinney feared that according to the existing methods of higher education that it tended to produce a dissatisfaction with the farm and home, that the result of liberally educating the farmer's sons was to drive them away from the farm, and the farm is deserted in consequence, and was more inclined to favor some less extended course of study which would be more practical in its nature. Mr. Goodwin thought if there was a definite aim in view as there should be that end, that if a boy was to be a farmer he should choose a scientific rather than a classical education.

Mr. Penber spoke of the deep interest he felt in these matters and thought there was nothing in work or surroundings of the farmer incompatible with intellectual growth and culture, that whatever feeling there may be that the position of the farmer is lower socially than that of other vocations, is owing to the farmers themselves, who are too apt to disparage their own calling and many times how the seeds of dissatisfaction in the minds of the children. If, as every one says, the farm is the best place to bring up the boy to manhood, does it not follow that it is equally as good a place for the boy to live after he has reached manhood.

WEDNESDAY FORENOON.

The session was taken up by the discussion of the topic, "The Culture of Indian Corn." E. M. Goodwin giving an interesting and instructive lecture on the nature, history, habits, importance and wonderful capabilities of this cereal.

Mr. Allen inquired how deep he would grow corn. Mr. Goodwin said he would prefer planting in drills instead of hills, can get more stalks on an acre and a larger yield.

Would cultivate as deeply as possible without seriously injuring the roots, and the ground was very dry. The tassel appears.

Questions, what is the best cow for butter? The Jersey and her grades no doubt.

What causes scab in potatoes? Sometimes it seems to be an insect, but it is not caused by it, and it is difficult to give any answer which would be of general application.

Does the burning of corn cobs effect their manurial benefit? Not much, but they would be better to land them ground and fed and carried to the land in that way.

Does the burning of bones effect their manurial value? Practically it does not, burning only makes a more fatty matter which is no use to the growing plant.

AFTERNOON.

E. R. Penber gave an address embodying many of the points of his Experience in Farming. This was attentively listened to, but owing to lack of time was not discussed. The Fruit Question was taken up, and participated in by Messrs. Gordon, Kinney, Chamberlain, and several others.

Mr. Lane leading the discussion. The local varieties seemed to be the Baldwin, Rhode Island Greening, and Northern Spy, each doing better in certain localities which seemed to be determined by the nature of the soil, different varieties doing best on certain soils.

It was found in many cases that trees would do very well where the soil was very shallow, only a few inches deep, when the underlying rock was loose and porous. The question of barrels for marketing the apples appeared to be a very important one, as it was very difficult to obtain empty four barrel and the cost of buying new ones was an item of considerable importance. The pulp worm had not as yet made its appearance on the island. This country, and is increasing, a great many new trees being set each year.

Rev. O. G. Wheeler expressed his interest and satisfaction in the sessions which had been held and a vote of thanks to the members of the board for their services were unanimously given. Mr. Goodwin responded in a few fitting words when an adjournment was made until evening.

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